



## **DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION**

### **Federal Aviation Administration**

#### **14 CFR Part 39**

**[Docket No. FAA-2022-0503; Project Identifier MCAI-2021-01244-T]**

**RIN 2120-AA64**

#### **Airworthiness Directives; Airbus SAS Airplanes**

**AGENCY:** Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), DOT.

**ACTION:** Notice of proposed rulemaking (NPRM).

**SUMMARY:** The FAA proposes to supersede Airworthiness Directive

(AD) 2018-03-12, which applies to certain Airbus SAS Model A318 series airplanes; Model A319-111, -112, -113, -114, -115, -131, -132, and -133 airplanes; Model A320-211, -212, -214, -231, -232, and -233 airplanes; and Model A321-111, -112, -131, -211, -212, -213, -231, and -232 airplanes. AD 2018-03-12 requires repetitive rototest inspections for cracking of the fastener holes in certain door stop fittings, and repair if necessary. Since the FAA issued AD 2018-03-12, new analysis by the manufacturer resulted in optimized compliance times for the inspections. This proposed AD would require repetitive rototest inspections for cracking of the fastener holes in certain door stop fittings at revised compliance times, and corrective actions if necessary, as specified in a European Union Aviation Safety Agency (EASA) AD, which is proposed for incorporation by reference. The FAA is proposing this AD to address the unsafe condition on these products.

**DATES:** The FAA must receive comments on this proposed AD by [INSERT DATE 45 DAYS AFTER DATE OF PUBLICATION IN THE FEDERAL REGISTER].

**ADDRESSES:** You may send comments, using the procedures found in 14 CFR 11.43 and 11.45, by any of the following methods:

- Federal eRulemaking Portal: Go to <https://www.regulations.gov>. Follow the instructions for submitting comments.

- Fax: 202-493-2251.

- Mail: U.S. Department of Transportation, Docket Operations, M-30, West Building Ground Floor, Room W12-140, 1200 New Jersey Avenue SE, Washington, DC 20590.

- Hand Delivery: U.S. Department of Transportation, Docket Operations, M-30, West Building Ground Floor, Room W12-140, 1200 New Jersey Avenue SE, Washington, DC 20590, between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m., Monday through Friday, except Federal holidays.

For material that will be incorporated by reference (IBR) in this AD, contact EASA, Konrad-Adenauer-Ufer 3, 50668 Cologne, Germany; telephone +49 221 8999 000; email [ADs@easa.europa.eu](mailto:ADs@easa.europa.eu); Internet [www.easa.europa.eu](http://www.easa.europa.eu). You may find this IBR material on the EASA website at <https://ad.easa.europa.eu>. You may view this IBR material at the FAA, Airworthiness Products Section, Operational Safety Branch, 2200 South 216th St., Des Moines, WA. For information on the availability of this material at the FAA, call 206-231-3195. It is also available in the AD docket on the Internet at <https://www.regulations.gov> by searching for and locating Docket No. FAA-2022-0503.

### **Examining the AD Docket**

You may examine the AD docket on the Internet at <https://www.regulations.gov> by searching for and locating Docket No. FAA-2022-0503; or in person at Docket Operations between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m., Monday through Friday, except Federal holidays. The AD docket contains this NPRM, any comments received, and other information. The street address for Docket Operations is listed above. Comments will be available in the AD docket shortly after receipt.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Vladimir Ulyanov, Aerospace Engineer, Large Aircraft Section, International Validation Branch, FAA, 2200 South 216th St., Des Moines, WA 98198; telephone 206-231-3229; email vladimir.ulyanov@faa.gov.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:**

**Comments Invited**

The FAA invites you to send any written relevant data, views, or arguments about this proposal. Send your comments to an address listed under ADDRESSES. Include “Docket No. FAA-2022-0503; Project Identifier MCAI-2021-01244-T” at the beginning of your comments. The most helpful comments reference a specific portion of the proposal, explain the reason for any recommended change, and include supporting data. The FAA will consider all comments received by the closing date and may amend the proposal because of those comments.

Except for Confidential Business Information (CBI) as described in the following paragraph, and other information as described in 14 CFR 11.35, the FAA will post all comments received, without change, to <https://www.regulations.gov>, including any personal information you provide. The agency will also post a report summarizing each substantive verbal contact received about this proposed AD.

**Confidential Business Information**

CBI is commercial or financial information that is both customarily and actually treated as private by its owner. Under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) (5 U.S.C. 552), CBI is exempt from public disclosure. If your comments responsive to this NPRM contain commercial or financial information that is customarily treated as private, that you actually treat as private, and that is relevant or responsive to this NPRM, it is important that you clearly designate the submitted comments as CBI. Please mark each page of your submission containing CBI as “PROPIN.” The FAA will treat such marked

submissions as confidential under the FOIA, and they will not be placed in the public docket of this NPRM. Submissions containing CBI should be sent to Vladimir Ulyanov, Aerospace Engineer, Large Aircraft Section, International Validation Branch, FAA, 2200 South 216th St., Des Moines, WA 98198; telephone 206-231-3229; email [vladimir.ulyanov@faa.gov](mailto:vladimir.ulyanov@faa.gov). Any commentary that the FAA receives which is not specifically designated as CBI will be placed in the public docket for this rulemaking.

## **Discussion**

The FAA issued AD 2018-03-12, Amendment 39-19185 (83 FR 5906, February 12, 2018) (AD 2018-03-12), which applies to certain Airbus SAS Model A318 series airplanes; Model A319-111, -112, -113, -114, -115, -131, -132, and -133 airplanes; Model A320-211, -212, -214, -231, -232, and -233 airplanes; and Model A321-111, -112, -131, -211, -212, -213, -231, and -232 airplanes. AD 2018-03-12 requires repetitive rototest inspections for cracking of the fastener holes in certain door stop fittings, and repair if necessary. The FAA issued AD 2018-03-12 to address cracking at the door stop fitting holes of fuselage frame (FR) 66 and FR68. Such cracking could result in reduced structural integrity of the airplane due to the failure of structural components.

## **Actions Since AD 2018-03-12 Was Issued**

Since the FAA issued AD 2018-03-12, Airbus has revised the compliance times to accomplish the rototest inspections based on reports from operators and new analysis.

EASA, which is the Technical Agent for the Member States of the European Union, has issued EASA AD 2021-0242, dated November 8, 2021 (EASA AD 2021-0242) (also referred to as the Mandatory Continuing Airworthiness Information, or the MCAI), to correct an unsafe condition for certain Airbus SAS Model A318 series airplanes; Model A319-111, -112, -113, -114, -115, -131, -132, and -133 airplanes; Model A320-211, -212, -214, -215, -216, -231, -232, and -233 airplanes; and Model A321-111, -112, -131, -211, -212, -213, -231, and -232 airplanes. EASA AD

2021-0242 supersedes EASA AD 2016-0238 (which corresponds to FAA AD 2018-03-12). Model A320-215 airplanes are not certificated by the FAA and are not included on the U.S. type certificate data sheet; this AD therefore does not include those airplanes in the applicability.

This proposed AD was prompted by reports of fatigue damage in the structure for the door stop fittings on certain fuselage frames. The FAA is proposing this AD to address cracking at the door stop fitting holes of fuselage FR66 and FR68 which could result in reduced structural integrity of the airplane. See the MCAI for additional background information.

### **Model A320-216 Airplanes**

The Airbus SAS Model A320-216 was U.S. type certificated on December 19, 2016. Before that date, any EASA ADs that affected Model A320-216 airplanes were included in the U.S. type certificate as part of the Required Airworthiness Actions List (RAAL). One or more Model A320-216 airplanes have subsequently been placed on the U.S. Register, and will now be included in FAA AD actions. For Model A320-216 airplanes, the requirements that correspond to AD 2018-03-12 were mandated by the MCAI via the RAAL. Although that RAAL requirement is still in effect, for continuity and clarity the FAA has identified Model A320-216 airplanes in paragraph (c) of this proposed AD; the MCAI that is specified in paragraph (g) in this proposed AD includes retained requirements, which would therefore apply to those airplanes.

### **Explanation of Retained Requirements**

Although this proposed AD does not explicitly restate the requirements of AD 2018-03-12, this proposed AD would retain all of the requirements of AD 2018-03-12. Those requirements are referenced in EASA AD 2021-0242, which, in turn, is referenced in paragraph (g) of this proposed AD.

## **Related Service Information under 1 CFR Part 51**

EASA AD 2021-0242 describes procedures for rototest inspections for cracking of the fastener holes in the airframe structure for the door stop fittings installation in FR66 and FR68, and corrective actions. Corrective actions include repair or modification of fastener holes at door stop locations.

This material is reasonably available because the interested parties have access to it through their normal course of business or by the means identified in the ADDRESSES section.

## **FAA's Determination and Requirements of this Proposed AD**

This product has been approved by the aviation authority of another country, and is approved for operation in the United States. Pursuant to the FAA's bilateral agreement with the State of Design Authority, the FAA has been notified of the unsafe condition described in the MCAI referenced above. The FAA is proposing this AD because the FAA evaluated all pertinent information and determined an unsafe condition exists and is likely to exist or develop on other products of the same type design.

## **Proposed AD Requirements**

This proposed AD would require accomplishing the actions specified in EASA AD 2021-0242 described previously, as incorporated by reference, except for any differences identified as exceptions in the regulatory text of this proposed AD.

## **Explanation of Required Compliance Information**

In the FAA's ongoing efforts to improve the efficiency of the AD process, the FAA developed a process to use some civil aviation authority (CAA) ADs as the primary source of information for compliance with requirements for corresponding FAA ADs. The FAA has been coordinating this process with manufacturers and CAAs. As a result, the FAA proposes to incorporate EASA AD 2021-0242 by reference in the FAA final rule. This proposed AD would, therefore, require compliance with EASA AD 2021-0242

in its entirety through that incorporation, except for any differences identified as exceptions in the regulatory text of this proposed AD. Using common terms that are the same as the heading of a particular section in EASA AD 2021-0242 does not mean that operators need comply only with that section. For example, where the AD requirement refers to “all required actions and compliance times,” compliance with this AD requirement is not limited to the section titled “Required Action(s) and Compliance Time(s)” in EASA AD 2021-0242. Service information required by EASA AD 2021-0242 for compliance will be available at <https://www.regulations.gov> by searching for and locating Docket No. FAA-2022-0503 after the FAA final rule is published.

### **Costs of Compliance**

The FAA estimates that this proposed AD affects 1,084 airplanes of U.S. registry. The FAA estimates the following costs to comply with this proposed AD:

#### **Estimated costs for required actions**

<b>Action</b>	<b>Labor cost</b>	<b>Parts cost</b>	<b>Cost per product</b>	<b>Cost on U.S. operators</b>
Inspections	Up to 25 work-hours X \$85 per hour = \$2,125	\$0	Up to \$2,125	Up to \$2,303,500

The FAA estimates the following costs to do any necessary on-condition modifications that would be required based on the results of any required actions. The FAA has no way of determining the number of aircraft that might need these on-condition modifications:

#### **Estimated costs of on-condition actions**

<b>Labor cost</b>	<b>Parts cost</b>	<b>Cost per product</b>
Up to 27 work-hours X \$85 per hour = \$2,295	\$610	\$2,905

The FAA has received no definitive data on which to base the cost estimates for the on-condition repairs specified in this proposed AD.

## **Authority for this Rulemaking**

Title 49 of the United States Code specifies the FAA's authority to issue rules on aviation safety. Subtitle I, section 106, describes the authority of the FAA Administrator. Subtitle VII: Aviation Programs, describes in more detail the scope of the Agency's authority.

The FAA is issuing this rulemaking under the authority described in Subtitle VII, Part A, Subpart III, Section 44701: General requirements. Under that section, Congress charges the FAA with promoting safe flight of civil aircraft in air commerce by prescribing regulations for practices, methods, and procedures the Administrator finds necessary for safety in air commerce. This regulation is within the scope of that authority because it addresses an unsafe condition that is likely to exist or develop on products identified in this rulemaking action.

## **Regulatory Findings**

The FAA determined that this proposed AD would not have federalism implications under Executive Order 13132. This proposed AD would not have a substantial direct effect on the States, on the relationship between the national Government and the States, or on the distribution of power and responsibilities among the various levels of government.

For the reasons discussed above, I certify this proposed regulation:

- (1) Is not a "significant regulatory action" under Executive Order 12866,
- (2) Will not affect intrastate aviation in Alaska, and
- (3) Will not have a significant economic impact, positive or negative, on a substantial number of small entities under the criteria of the Regulatory Flexibility Act.

## **List of Subjects in 14 CFR Part 39**

Air transportation, Aircraft, Aviation safety, Incorporation by reference, Safety.



## **The Proposed Amendment**

Accordingly, under the authority delegated to me by the Administrator, the FAA proposes to amend 14 CFR part 39 as follows:

### **PART 39 - AIRWORTHINESS DIRECTIVES**

1. The authority citation for part 39 continues to read as follows:

Authority: 49 U.S.C. 106(g), 40113, 44701.

#### **§ 39.13 [Amended]**

2. The FAA amends § 39.13 by:

a. Removing Airworthiness Directive (AD) 2018-03-12, Amendment 39-19185 (83 FR 5906, February 12, 2018); and

b. Adding the following new AD:

**Airbus SAS:** Docket No. FAA-2022-0503; Project Identifier MCAI-2021-01244-T.

#### **(a) Comments Due Date**

The FAA must receive comments on this airworthiness directive (AD) by [INSERT DATE 45 DAYS AFTER DATE OF PUBLICATION IN THE FEDERAL REGISTER].

#### **(b) Affected ADs**

This AD replaces AD 2018-03-12, Amendment 39-19185 (83 FR 5906, February 12, 2018) (AD 2018-03-12).

#### **(c) Applicability**

This AD applies to Airbus SAS Model airplanes specified in paragraphs (c)(1) through (4) of this AD, certificated in any category, as identified in European Union Aviation Safety Agency (EASA) AD 2021-0242, dated November 8, 2021 (EASA AD 2021-0242).

(1) Model A318-111, -112, -121, and -122 airplanes.

(2) Model A319-111, -112, -113, -114, -115, -131, -132, and -133 airplanes.

(3) Model A320-211, -212, -214, -216, -231, -232, and -233 airplanes.

(4) Model A321-111, -112, -131, -211, -212, -213, -231, and -232 airplanes.

**(d) Subject**

Air Transport Association (ATA) of America Code 53, Fuselage.

**(e) Reason**

This AD was prompted by reports of fatigue damage in the structure for the door stop fittings on certain fuselage frames, and new analysis by the manufacturer, which resulted in optimized compliance times for the inspections. The FAA is issuing this AD to address cracking at the door stop fitting holes of fuselage frame (FR) 66 and FR68, which could result in reduced structural integrity of the airplane.

**(f) Compliance**

Comply with this AD within the compliance times specified, unless already done.

**(g) Requirements**

Except as specified in paragraph (h) of this AD: Comply with all required actions and compliance times specified in, and in accordance with, EASA AD 2021-0242.

**(h) Exceptions to EASA AD 2021-0242**

(1) Where EASA AD 2021-0242 refers to its effective date, this AD requires using the effective date of this AD.

(2) The “Remarks” section of EASA AD 2021-0242 does not apply to this AD.

(3) Where paragraph (3) of EASA AD 2021-0242 specifies if any crack is found during any inspection to “contact Airbus for approved instructions for corrective actions and accomplish those instructions accordingly,” this AD requires if any cracking is found, the cracking must be repaired before further flight using a method approved by the Manager, Large Aircraft Section, International Validation Branch, FAA; or EASA; or Airbus SAS’s EASA Design Organization Approval (DOA). If approved by the DOA, the approval must include the DOA-authorized signature.

(4) Where paragraphs (2), (3), (5), and (5.1) of EASA AD 2021-0242 specify limits or actions in “the applicable SRM” or “the SRM,” for purposes of this AD, replace those phrases with the following phrase: “the applicable SRM as specified in the instructions of the inspection SB.”

**(i) No Reporting Requirement**

Although the service information referenced in EASA AD 2021-0242 specifies to submit certain information to the manufacturer, this AD does not include that requirement.

**(j) Other FAA AD Provisions**

The following provisions also apply to this AD:

(1) *Alternative Methods of Compliance (AMOCs)*: The Manager, Large Aircraft Section, International Validation Branch, FAA, has the authority to approve AMOCs for this AD, if requested using the procedures found in 14 CFR 39.19. In accordance with 14 CFR 39.19, send your request to your principal inspector or responsible Flight Standards Office, as appropriate. If sending information directly to the Large Aircraft Section, International Validation Branch, send it to the attention of the person identified in paragraph (k)(2) of this AD. Information may be emailed to: 9-AVS-AIR-730-AMOC@faa.gov.

(i) Before using any approved AMOC, notify your appropriate principal inspector, or lacking a principal inspector, the manager of the responsible Flight Standards Office.

(ii) AMOCs approved previously for AD 2018-03-12 are approved as AMOCs for the corresponding provisions of EASA AD 2021-0242 that are required by paragraph (g) of this AD.

(2) *Contacting the Manufacturer*: For any requirement in this AD to obtain instructions from a manufacturer, the instructions must be accomplished using a method approved by the Manager, Large Aircraft Section, International Validation Branch, FAA;

or EASA; or Airbus SAS's EASA Design Organization Approval (DOA). If approved by the DOA, the approval must include the DOA-authorized signature.

(3) *Required for Compliance (RC)*: For any service information referenced in EASA AD 2021-0242 that contains RC procedures and tests: Except as required by paragraph (j)(2) of this AD, RC procedures and tests must be done to comply with this AD; any procedures or tests that are not identified as RC are recommended. Those procedures and tests that are not identified as RC may be deviated from using accepted methods in accordance with the operator's maintenance or inspection program without obtaining approval of an AMOC, provided the procedures and tests identified as RC can be done and the airplane can be put back in an airworthy condition. Any substitutions or changes to procedures or tests identified as RC require approval of an AMOC.

**(k) Related Information**

(1) For information about EASA AD 2021-0242 contact EASA, Konrad-Adenauer-Ufer 3, 50668 Cologne, Germany; telephone +49 221 8999 000; email [ADs@easa.europa.eu](mailto:ADs@easa.europa.eu); Internet [www.easa.europa.eu](http://www.easa.europa.eu). You may find this EASA AD on the EASA website at <https://ad.easa.europa.eu>. You may view this material at the FAA, Airworthiness Products Section, Operational Safety Branch, 2200 South 216th St., Des Moines, WA. For information on the availability of this material at the FAA, call 206-231-3195. This material may be found in the AD docket on the Internet at <https://www.regulations.gov> by searching for and locating Docket No. FAA-2022-0503.

(2) For more information about this AD, contact Vladimir Ulyanov, Aerospace Engineer, Large Aircraft Section, International Validation Branch, FAA, 2200 South

216th St., Des Moines, WA 98198; telephone 206-231-3229; email

vladimir.ulyanov@faa.gov.

Issued on April 21, 2022.

Gaetano A. Sciortino, Deputy Director for Strategic Initiatives,  
Compliance & Airworthiness Division,  
Aircraft Certification Service.

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